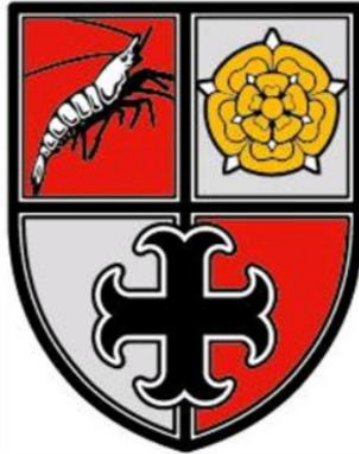


MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY



MARSHSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

May 2024

Date reviewed by sub-committee: May 2024

Date Approved by Full Governing Body May 2024

Chair: Wendy Cheetham & Joanne Swift

Headteacher: Shaun Haughey Review Date: May 2026

EQUALITY STATEMENT

Our school recognises children's diverse circumstances and is committed to its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Each child regardless of their background could be a victim of child abuse and is therefore entitled to the same degree of protection and support.

At Marshside Primary School we are committed to working together to provide an inspirational and exciting learning environment where all children can develop an enthusiasm for life-long learning. We believe that children should feel happy, safe and valued so that they gain a respectful, caring attitude towards each other and the environment both locally and globally.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Our HEART Values



Honesty

- Know that school is a safe space where we can relax and be ourselves
- To be heard and express ourselves clearly and respectfully



Empathy and Tolerance

- Respect ourselves and others
- To show empathy to others
- To spread kindness to others



Aspire and Achieve

- To take educated risks and try new things
- Have confidence in ourselves to believe we can achieve anything
- To have a positive attitude
- To be resilient, independent and self-sufficient



Respect

- To be polite and courteous to others
- To take pride in ourselves and our community
- To spend time outdoors and care for the environment



Thrive

- To feel loved and know that we matter
- To find our passion
- To feel safe and happy
- To love being in school and being part of our community
- Have fun

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

1, The Importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need. All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events.

Research suggests that approximately 10% of children aged between 5 and 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: “in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”.

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupil’s wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that they are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- All pupils are valued
- Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated

In addition to children’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing and we have a separate policy dedicated to this.

2, Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health
- How we prevent mental health problems
- How we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse
- Key information about some common mental health problems
- Where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support

3, Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

"A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community."

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- Feel confident in themselves
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- Learn and achieve

4, A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands – our Heart Values encompass all of this
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'.

5, Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health.

Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems. These can include: a physical long-term illness, having a parent with mental health difficulties, death, and loss such as the loss of friendships, a family breakdown and bullying.

The staff also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, positive communication, developing problem-solving skills, a sense of worth or belonging and emotional literacy.

The school's Mental Health Wellbeing Team;

Head Teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead/LAC Teacher - Mrs Sandland

SENDCO / Inclusion Manager/Mental Health First Aider/Designated Safeguarding Team - Miss Brindle

Deputy Head Teacher/Designated Safeguarding Team - Mrs McKenna

Learning Mentor/ELSA/ Mental Health Lead/ Mental Health First Aider/Designated Safeguarding Team - Mrs Owen

are responsible for:

- Leading and working with other staff members to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- Providing advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- Keeping staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- Liaising with the PSHE Leader on teaching about mental health
- Being the first point of contact and communication with mental health services
- Leading on and making referrals to services

There are clear links with our Behaviour Policy because we believe that behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, is likely to be related to an unmet mental health need.

We consider behaviour to be communication.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times including support for anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that can provide this support to pupils and their families.

We make links with a range of specialist services, such as CAMHS and MHST, and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' provision.

Support includes:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Team
- SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision
- Learning Mentor and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) - core meetings to support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils
- The NHS Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST)
- Play therapist accessed in school
- Sefton Young Carers Team
- SWACA support for the child

6, Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

Pupil-led Activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Projects such as the SMILE project to boost wellbeing
- Peer Mediating project with Year 6

Transition Support

- Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST) Transition Workshops across Year 6 in the Summer Term and other opportunities for relevant mental health workshops for pupils / staff / parent / carers throughout the year
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- Key Adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils
- Speech and Language Transition groups
- ASD outreach transition support for parents and children with autism diagnoses

Class Activities

- Worry boxes
- Daily check ins
- Mindfulness and breathing/meditation in class
- Sporting activities
- Achievements celebrated and rewarded in class

Whole School

- Mental Health Wellbeing focus threading throughout the school ethos and PSHE curriculum
- Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) resources
- Encouraging positives relationships so children can be aware of Trusted Adults around them and where to find support

- Assembly and calendar of Mental Health and Wellbeing themes
- Daily Mile
- Using the power of reading to explore themes and learn about emotions, difference, loss, bullying, change, resilience, etc. - the whole school will explore the same PHSE themed book
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school
- After school clubs e.g. outdoor club, dodgeball, football, tag rugby, board games club
- Heart Awards in praise assembly as well as the celebration of other achievements
- MHST workshops such as '5 Ways to Wellbeing'

Small Group and 1-1 interventions and ELSA support

- Small friendship, social skills groups
- Anxiety and anger interventions such as Anxiety Gremlin/Anger Gremlin
- Sensory Room for those children who are finding the classroom overwhelming
- Self-esteem boosting groups
- Resilience interventions

Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally health and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

The content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to identify when mental health problems may be emerging, and to seek appropriate support when needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association statutory guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

7, Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible and provide a prompt response. We do this in different ways including:

- Identify individuals that might need support
- Working with the School Office staff who are often the first point of contact with families seeking support
- Home visits for our new Reception intake
- Induction meetings for pupils / families joining after the Reception year
- Analysing behaviour, exclusions, attendance etc. to spot patterns and concerns
- Pupil surveys at the beginning of the school Year

- Weekly staff briefing for staff to raise concerns about individual children
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer or transition
- Parental meetings
- Enabling pupils to raise concerns to class teacher and support staff
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the school class teacher or to any member of staff - we have an 'Open Door Policy'
- Meetings with outside support services such as CAMHS, MHST, SALT or Educational Psychologist
- All staff have had training on the protective and risk factors, types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Designated Safeguarding Team, SENDCO or Learning Mentor/Mental Health Lead.

These signs might include:

- Non-verbal behaviour
- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- Lowering academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Not wanting to do PE or
- Get changed for PE
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as noncompliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the school's child protection procedures are followed. A risk assessment and plan will be made.

Verbal Disclosures by Pupils

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who verbally disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

Non-Verbal Disclosures by Pupils

Staff also recognise persistent and unusual non-verbal disclosures in behaviours in line with the NICE (National Institute for Health & Care Excellence) recommendation that behaviour may be an unmet need or message.

Confidentiality

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported on CPOMS to the Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded. We then implement our assessment system based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating. The Safeguarding Team regularly reviews all processes. All staff are trained to use CPOMS. We recognise that just like physical health, mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time and is fluid and changes, there are no absolutes.

8, Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of relevant sources of support within school and in the local community.

9, Working with parents and carers

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment. We also operate an 'open door' policy; you can approach any member of staff with your concerns on the door or via Dojo, and the Head Teacher and Learning Mentor are generally on the playground during drop off or pick up at least once a day.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes – mainly through our Dojo system
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy easily accessible to parents
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience, behaviours that challenge etc.

Where a concern has been raised, teachers or the Learning Mentor/Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away
- Agree mental health care plan and protection plan where appropriate including next clear steps

- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting groups

We will ensure that the parents/carers of children accessing in-school ELSA work or group interventions are kept informed of how those sessions are progressing and anything else relevant they may need to know.

Young Minds	Emotional wellbeing and mental health	https://www.youngminds.org.uk/
CAMHS	A range of support for mental health difficulties (Tier 3)	https://www.CAMHS@alderhey.nhs.uk/
Kooth	Online counselling	https://www.kooth.com/
Winston's Wish	Bereavement support/counselling	https://winstonswish.org/
Samaritans	General support	https://samaritans.org/
Place2Be	Mental health support	https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/
BEAT	Eating disorder support	https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/
ADDvanced Solutions	Support for young people and families living with neurodevelopmental conditions, learning difficulties and the associated mental health needs	https://advancedsolutions.co.uk/
Venus Centre	Support for women and children including counselling	https://venuscharity.org/
Parenting 2000	Emotional and practical support for families, children and young people	https://parenting2000.org.uk/

